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## **Birkholz Announces Aquifer Protection Bill Passes Senate**

*Legislation will determine and map Michigan's water resources in need of protection*

May 8, 2003 – State Senator Patricia Birkholz, R-Saugatuck Township, today announced the full Senate passed Senate Bill 289, conserving and protection Michigan's greatest resource, its water.

“Senate Bill 289 allows us to take several important steps to protect our groundwater,” said Senator Birkholz. “This bill will lead us to the development of a long-term aquifer protection initiative.”

The critical first step is to define the water resources which need to be protected and develop a map to determine where to focus the state's attention. The bill sets four goals:

- Develop a map and an inventory of all groundwater throughout the State of Michigan.
- Require a thorough consistent reporting program to provide the state the necessary data.
- Create an advisory council of all major impacted user groups.

In some areas of the state, competing water uses have depleted local aquifers, depriving residents of domestic water supplies and often sending municipalities to courts. This will be a major step in ending neighbor vs. neighbor and community vs. community disputes over water.

“This is the first step in protecting Michigan's groundwater, aquifers and ultimately the Great Lakes,” said Birkholz. “This legislation will impact generations of Michigan's citizens to come.”

Senate Bill 289 now moves to the House of Representatives.

**Editor's Note: Audio comments from Senator Birkholz are available at  
[www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire)**